



## Cowards die many times before their deaths

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**Caesar:**

"Cowards die many times before their deaths,  
The valiant never taste of death but once."

*Julius Caesar (II, ii, 32-37)*

Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, has had dreams in which her husband was murdered. At Caesar's request, the priests have sacrificed an animal which, upon being cut open, was discovered to have no heart. And so they sent word to Caesar that he should stay home on this fateful day, the ides of March, which the Soothsayer had already warned him about earlier in the play. Caesar muses, "'What can be avoided /Whose end is purposed by the mighty gods?" In other words, if the gods are predicting that he is going to die, then how will he get around it? He goes on to encourage his wife with the now-famous lines, finding it strange that men fear death so much, when death is inevitable in every man's life. He has been a strong and brave man, and has not wasted precious hours of his life anticipating tragedy.

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